



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Karen Lovett, Media Relations Assistant- (401) 222-4600 ext. 2510

Embargo until: Immediate release - Wednesday, March 9th, 2005

Education Commissioner Names Special Master for Hope High School

PROVIDENCE – Education Commissioner Peter McWalters today (March 9th) named Nicholas C. Donohue, former New Hampshire Commissioner of Education, as the Special Master for Hope High School.

In that role, Donohue will oversee the implementation of the Corrective Action Plan for Hope High School that Commissioner McWalters issued last month. Donohue will exercise the power of the Commissioner and will report to him regularly regarding the reconstitution of Hope High School, and he will serve as a member of the governance structures at Hope High School.

“Nick Donohue is known nationwide for his skills and experience at brokering partnerships,” McWalters said in announcing the appointment. “He has significant state-level experience working with schools during this era of high standards and strict accountability. He also brings his expertise in developing systems of policy and research. He will be a great asset to me and to the Providence Public Schools.”

“I look forward to supporting the teachers, administrators, community members, and students as they continue forward toward excellence,” Donohue said. “This effort will be a success because of their leadership, determination, expertise, and knowledge. I hope to contribute in a way that makes their work easier and leads to strong student success.”

Donohue served as Education Commissioner in New Hampshire from 2000 until last January. Previously, he served for three years as Deputy Commissioner of Education. He has also served as the project director for the Boston Leadership Academy, at Boston University, which offered support and training for Boston Public Schools; as the coordinator for the Changing Schools Project, in Boston; and as a special liaison for the Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast & Islands.

In his new position, he will be responsible for ensuring that Hope High School is operated as three small, autonomous learning communities and that families and community partners are engaged in the operation of the school at a decision-making level, in accordance with Commissioner McWalters’s Order of Reconstitution and Corrective Action Plan.

Donohue will begin his work immediately, and he is expected to be on site at Hope High School several days a week.